

Applicant Name Darby, Town of
Project Name Darby Water System Improvements

Project Abstract

The Town of Darby plans on building a new 900,000-gallon water storage tank to provide fire protection and sufficient domestic water supply. Over 20,000 linear feet of water main will be constructed or replaced, reducing leaking, providing increased fire protection, and reducing stagnant water at dead-end mains. One new well will be put into service and disinfection systems will be installed to ensure the health and safety of the community.

Darby is the southernmost incorporated municipality in Ravalli County, nestled in the Bitterroot Mountains. The town operates the municipal water and sewer system, police department, court system, cemetery, parks, rodeo grounds, museum, and contracts for town fire protection services.

Miners, fur trappers, and loggers converged into a community that was named Darby by Postmaster James Darby in 1888. Structures along Main Street were destroyed three separate times by fire. Each time, town residents came together and rebuilt the "town," creating a strong sense of community pride and accomplishment. The town became an "Incorporated Municipality" in 1917. Even with the ups and downs of the economy and the mining, fur, and logging trades, Darby has continued to grow through agriculture, ranching, the timber industry, and tourism.

The current water system is beginning to feel its age. The system is almost 50 years old with very few upgrades over the years. The problem is that the town's drinking water system needs a major overhaul. The town's distribution system is leaking almost 70% of the water being pumped, the tank is grossly undersized, and the dead-end mains allow water to become stagnant. After last summer's "boil order" from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the town decided to aggressively tackle the entire drinking water system.

The proposed solution is to do the following:

- Build a 900,000-gallon water storage tank;
- Construct or replace 200,000 linear feet of water main, thus reducing leakage, providing increased fire protection, and reducing stagnant water at dead-end mains; and
- Put in a new well and install disinfection systems to ensure the health and safety of the community.